NeighbourWoods in Beaverbrook

For the love of trees

Do you love the trees of Beaverbrook and have an interest in their well-being? Would you like to learn how to identify trees and understand how to assess their health? Consider volunteering with **NeighbourWoods in Beaverbrook**, a community forest stewardship project.

Neighbour*Woods*© is a comprehensive urban tree inventory protocol developed by Dr. Andy Kenney and Dr. Danijela Puric-Mladenovic of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Toronto. The protocol assists communities to collect tree information needed to provide sound stewardship of their urban forest. This data is important to assess the health of existing trees and to support decisions about future needs. The protocol has been used by several Ontario communities such as the Town of Mitchell, Kingston, North Bay, Toronto, and Windsor and has been endorsed by the City of Ottawa to complement the city's Urban Forest Management Plan. As well as enhancing the attractiveness of properties, studies have shown that urban trees improve air quality, mitigate storm water, and reduce summer energy consumption by shading homes.

Since 2017 the Kanata Beaverbrook Community Association (KBCA) has been sponsoring the NeighbourWoods in Beaverbrook project, a volunteer led initiative to assess the private and public trees on Beaverbrook's streets. By the end of 2021, some 2,600+ trees had been inventoried representing about one fifth of the Beaverbrook canopy! The data indicated that while the species diversity was rich, the number of spruce and pine trees was higher than the rule of thumb for the composition of an urban forest. It was also noted that larger, older trees were dominant, some of which were in poor or declining condition. If this trend holds for the entire neighbourhood, it may be time for a comprehensive regeneration plan to establish the next generation of trees. Plantable spots were also identified.

This year a two-day volunteer training session is being offered on Saturday, June 4th and Sunday, June 5th at the Beaverbrook Community Center. The training topics include tree species identification, measurement and location, tree health and condition assessment and the state of the tree's growing site. The material will be covered through outside field demonstrations and hands-on exercises. Participants will learn how to use the Neighbour*Woods*© data-entry forms, forestry measurement equipment and will be provided with tree identification resources and hint sheets. There is no course fee for Beaverbrook residents.

High school students are welcome to participate in the project to fulfill their community involvement hours.

After the course, participants will be partnered with more experienced volunteers to inventory additional streets in Beaverbrook. This field work will be scheduled at the convenience of the team members over the summer months.

To register for the June 4-5 course, email green@kanatabeaverbrook.ca and provide your first name, last name, street address, and phone number, and email.